
CHAPTER 11

CODES OF SAFE PRACTICES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

11.00	INTRODUCTION
11.01	PURPOSE
11.02	POLICY STATEMENT
11.03	DEFINITION OF A HAZARDOUS CONDITION(S)
11.04	WRITING CODES OF SAFE PRACTICES
11.05	SAMPLE CODES OF SAFE PRACTICES

CHAPTER 11

11.00 INTRODUCTION

This information is for supervisors and employees who work in office settings and promotes the use of written procedures to identify and control potential physical and/or environmental hazardous conditions in the workplace.

11.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize supervisors and employees with potential physical and/or environmental hazardous conditions. Instructions are also provided regarding how to develop step-by-step procedures that will identify and control hazardous conditions and assist to reduce injuries and illnesses in the workplace.

Field operations; such as Maintenance, Construction, Surveys, and Structures have written work practices known as “Codes of Safe Practices.” It is anticipated that supervisors will use the suggestions presented in this chapter as a guide in developing written Codes of Safe Practices to identify and control hazardous conditions unique to their operations.

To distinguish between field and office work, the reference “Code of Safe Practices” will be used here for office work settings.

11.02 POLICY STATEMENT

Supervisors shall review all work activities and operations to identify and control potential physical and/or environmental hazards and evaluate the need to develop Codes of Safe Practices.

11.03 DEFINITION OF A HAZARDOUS CONDITION(S)

A hazard is any existing or potential condition in the workplace which, by itself or by interacting with other variables, can result in injury, property damage, and/or other losses.

There are two components to this definition:

- A hazardous condition may not exist at all times to be classified as a hazard during the period of evaluation; and
- A hazardous condition may not be the result of independent failure of workplace components, but may result from one workplace component acting upon or influencing another.

In any work activity, workers, equipment, and materials interact within the work environment to produce a product or perform a service. Easy-to-follow Codes of Safe Practices can be developed from reviewing this interaction and may help reduce workplace injuries and illnesses.

11.04 WRITING CODES OF SAFE PRACTICES

Codes of Safe Practices may be developed for any work activity or operation and may cover a work activity involving only a single person or several employees. Codes can be written to cover the maintenance and repair of office copy machines, use of paper cutters, preparing for a field trip, inspecting a bridge deck, or operating a CADD machine.

A Code of Safe Practices is developed and written to provide the following:

- A list of potential physical and/or environmental hazards associated with a work activity or operation; and
- A list of specific instructions that identify various operating procedures, reference materials, and equipment required to avoid injuries and illnesses.

Supervisors may consider having employees sign and date a copy of the Code of Safe Practices to ensure that they have read and understand the purpose, content, and scope of a particular code.

11.05 SAMPLES CODES OF SAFE PRACTICES

The following pages illustrate three (3) sample Codes of Safe Practices covering routine activities found in most work environments. Supervisors and employees can use these examples as guidelines for developing a Code of Safe Practices for any activity encountered.

Supervisors are encouraged to review and evaluate work procedures and/or operations and analyze and write Codes of Safe Practices for their offices and/or unique work activities.

The suggested format shown at the end of this chapter may be changed to fit local needs. It is essential is that all of the required elements be included in completed Codes of Safe Practices.

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CODE OF SAFE PRACTICES (EXAMPLE ONLY)

GENERAL OFFICE

OFFICE WORK ENVIRONMENT

PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

TYPICAL OFFICE HAZARDS:

1. Trip, slip, and fall hazards;
2. Work areas not kept clean and clear;
3. Electrical cords not secure;
4. Overcrowding of employees;
5. Doors and aisles not kept clear;
6. File drawers open;
7. Appliances such as coffee pots, microwave ovens, and fans on a single electrical circuit;
8. Bending, stooping, and lifting heavy objects; and/or
9. Office equipment/furniture not arranged for efficiency/convenience.

WORK PRACTICES

TYPICAL PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID INJURY:

1. Report unsafe conditions to supervisor;
2. Store materials and supplies in a safe and orderly manner;
3. Place trash and refuse in proper containers;
4. Wipe up spills promptly;
5. Never leave file or desk drawers open;
6. Use proper lifting and bending techniques;
7. Electrical cords must be plugged into appropriate wall receptacles;
8. Electrical cords must not show signs of wear, heat, or fraying;
9. All electrical extension cords must be three-prong, grounded cords;
10. Fans and portable heaters must have hand guards;
11. Know the locations of fire extinguishers; and
12. Maintain first aid supplies.

CODE OF SAFE PRACTICES

COPY MACHINE

PAPER REPLACEMENT

PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

TYPICAL HAZARDS OF ADDING PAPER TO A COPY MACHINE:

1. Slip, trip, and fall hazard;
2. Paper cuts;
3. Bending, stooping, and lifting heavy objects;
4. Overcrowding of employees;
5. Moving machine parts; and
6. Exposure to sharp edges and hidden obstructions.

WORK PRACTICES

TYPICAL PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID INJURY:

1. Be familiar with manufacturer's instructions;
2. Turn-off electrical power, if necessary;
3. Open doors slowly;
4. Watch Be alert to other employees in the area;
5. Open paper trays;
6. Open paper wrappings carefully to avoid paper cut;
7. Bend, stoop, and lift properly;
8. Place paper in machine tray carefully;
9. Close machine doors; and
10. Clean up debris as necessary.

CODE OF SAFE PRACTICES**FIELD TRIP****PREPARING FOR A FIELD TRIP****PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS****TYPICAL FIELD TRIP HAZARDS:**

1. Adverse weather conditions;
2. Slippery roadways;
3. Moving traffic/traffic congestion;
4. Hazardous parking areas;
5. Noise;
6. Impaired drivers;
7. Footing on uneven terrain;
8. Poor visibility;
9. Flying particles; and
10. Bending, stooping, and lifting objects.

WORK PRACTICES**TYPICAL PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID INJURY:**

1. Review Safety Manual for field work safety items;
2. Wear appropriate footwear, hard hat, safety glasses, and warning garments;
3. Wear appropriate personal clothing;
4. Perform pre-operation inspection on vehicle;
5. Bend, stoop, and lift properly;
6. Obey traffic laws;
7. Be alert for other motorists;
8. Stop and/or park vehicle in safe place;
9. Exit vehicle properly (away from traffic);
10. Avoid backing vehicle, if possible;
11. Use physical protection from traffic where practicable (e.g., a vehicle, guardrail, K-rail, etc.);
12. Work facing traffic and/or use lookout;
13. Wear hearing protection as required.